

What Is Grace? : How Grace operates in the Life of the Believer

by Danny Lirette

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When the word "law" is used among Believers, that old "red flag" comes up, as if the "law" is a thing to be avoided. But is this Biblical? No. Before you tune out, bear with me for a moment.

Christ Jesus Himself said in Matthew 5:17 the following: "Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose."

Many today misunderstand why Jesus Christ came. They teach that Jesus came to remove the Law; to destroy it; to take it away. Some water that down a bit and say that while the Law is good and has it's purpose, Christians should not have to place any focus on the Law of God. This is error! The Law of God stands for all time and eternity and while some modern Grace Teachers will tell you to avoid any and all preaching of God's Law for Christians, the Bible speaks differently on the issue as we will see.

Let me state that Christians are indeed under the law; however, let us define "what" law we're not under and what law we are under.

We're not under the Law of Moses; that is, we're not obligated to the Old Testament's Law, including the 10 commandments, to be made right with God. In fact, a common misunderstanding among Believers today is that the Hebrews of the Old Testament were themselves "under the Mosaic Law" in the sense of having to obey all of it in order to be made right with, and continue to remain right with, God. The Mosaic Law of God was never designed to make one right with God. The Lord knew that no man could keep His Law and hence He gave it to show exactly that; that no one can perfectly obey His Law. His Law was designed to show us that we're condemned because of our sin; it was not designed to remove our sins, just as we read in Galatians 2:16 which says:

"Yet we know that a person is made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ, not by obeying the law. And we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be made right with God because of our faith in Christ, not because we have obeyed the law. For no one will ever be made right with God by obeying the law."

So we see that God's Law was not given in order to be saved. The Old Testament Law wasn't set in place so God could save people as we've just read that God's Law does not save. It was given to show us our sinfulness and our need - not for more laws! - but for a New and Living Covenant.

All of that said, the Law of God still stands; it's a direct reflection of the very nature and character of God Himself. It displays His absolute righteousness and demand for total and complete purity of life, both inwardly and outwardly. There

is no such thing as the Law of God being done away with in the sense that His Law is no longer binding on us - whether saved or lost. It is; plain and simple. It's still sinful to steal, to covet our neighbor's wife, to bear false witness, etc. His Law still stands; His Law will stand for all of time and eternity.

Let us look now to Romans 7:7 which says, "Well then, am I suggesting that the law of God is sinful? Of course not! In fact, it was the law that showed me my sin. I would never have known that coveting is wrong if the law had not said, "You must not covet."

Notice that the Law of God was given to us so that we could be shown what sin is. Without God's Law, sin would not be defined; thus we conclude from Romans 7:7 that the Law of God is essential in knowing what sin is. Further, in 1 John 3:4 we read these words, "Everyone who sins is breaking God's law, for all sin is contrary to the law of God."

The breaking of God's Law is sin. All sin is against God's Law and therefore the Law of God is necessary and essential in our lives in order to know if/when we sin. The Holy Spirit of God uses the Law of God to convict us of wrongdoing. In doing so, He then calls us to repent and trust in Christ for the power to obey the Law... not break it.

In fact, those who break God's laws will one day stand before God and give an account of their practice of sin. Jesus Christ makes it abundantly clear that those who break God's laws will be cast into eternal Hell:

Matthew 7:21-23 "Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. On judgment day many will say to me, 'Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.' But I will reply, 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God's laws.'

Notice that Jesus is addressing those who were prophesying and casting out demons. It's clear then, from this passage of Scripture, that Jesus was speaking to those who were living in New Covenant Days as people under the Old Covenant were not going around casting out demons and only prophets were prophesying. Thus, we conclude that He sends to Hell those who believed themselves to be saved yet continued to break God's laws, showing that their professed salvation was counterfeit. These people had giftings and good works yet they were law breakers at the same time and Christ states that He did not know them as His own.

Some among us today would suggest that those who preach against sin and uphold the Law of God as good and holy are "living under the Old Covenant". These precious people are deceived! Those who preach against sin and uphold God's Law as binding today are the very ones who indeed know Grace! No, not all do; some are purely legalistic yet the true and genuine Grace Teacher will speak "very much" on God's Law in a way that exalts the Law to it's "proper" position in the life of the Believer. Those who avoid the preaching of God's Law and who rarely make mention of sin or who make light of sin by teaching that one can know God while practicing sin are preaching a message nowhere found in the New Covenant. One is not under grace while being shackled up and having sex outside of marriage; one is not under grace while committing adultery or walking in offence and unforgiveness. Grace, as we will see, manifests itself in the fact that it brings the Believer into obedience to the Law of God "by the Power of the Holy Spirit". The manifestation that one is not under the Grace of God shows itself in the fact that a life remains unchanged and continues in the practice of sin.

Even under the Old Covenant we see the Grace of God being poured out on Believers. Let's take King David as an example. He committed adultery and committed murder. His prayer of repentance is found in Psalm 51. Notice that David says the following to the Lord in His prayer:

"You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one. You do not want a burnt offering." (verse 16)

Remember, David was under the Old Covenant. When one sinned in the Old Covenant, they had to give an animal sacrifice. For David's sins he should have been stoned. His sins called for death by the Law of God; not an animal sacrifice. While the "Law" called for his death - and rightly so - King David didn't appeal to God's Law; he appealed to God's Grace. Notice what he says in the next verse (17):

"The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God."

King David, under the Old Covenant, knew what grace was and he appealed to God's grace. You see, he couldn't appeal to the Law for the sins he was guilty of because the Law would have killed him! He came to God in brokenness and the Lord forgave him.. apart from any animal sacrifice. His repentance and confession were accepted by God. David didn't break or bypass God's Law in seeking forgiveness; he simply did not appeal to it at all! Rather, he came to God in childlike faith, trusting that the Lord would redeem him and God indeed delivered David from his sins!

This example - and there are other examples of grace in the Old Testament - shows that God indeed poured His Grace out on the truly broken and repentant in the Old Testament. You see, while some sins called for the sinner's death - "by the Law" - God's Grace prevailed to those who sought Him in brokenness "outside" of His Law.

This is the point; that if we seek to be made right with God by His Law, we're doomed! If, however, we seek to be made right with God by His "Grace", then we're sure to find mercy! There's no mercy in the Law; there's only condemnation. Do you want to know why the Law of God required animal sacrifices for sin? It's because those animal sacrifices, while required "by" the Law were not "of" the Law. The animal sacrifices were a type of God's Grace smack dab in the middle of God's Law. Grace and Law were working together under the Old Covenant system. The Law said, "You're guilty!" while the animal sacrifices said, "You're atoned for!". The problem? The blood of bulls and goats only covered sin, so to speak; it didn't remove or set the offender free. This is why there were continual sacrifices under the Old Covenant, because sins were not removed; forgiveness was only "credited" to the sinner until that time when Christ's Holy Blood would be shed once and for all for those who came to Him in repentance and in faith:

Hebrews 10:1-4 "The old system under the law of Moses was only a shadow, a dim preview of the good things to come, not the good things themselves. The sacrifices under that system were repeated again and again, year after year, but they were never able to provide perfect cleansing for those who came to worship. If they could have provided perfect cleansing, the sacrifices would have stopped, for the worshipers would have been purified once for all time, and their feelings of guilt would have disappeared. But instead, those sacrifices actually reminded them of their sins year after year. For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."

Hebrews 9:24-28 "For Christ did not enter into a holy place made with human hands, which was only a copy of the true one in heaven. He entered into heaven itself to appear now before God on our behalf. And he did not enter heaven to offer himself again and again, like the high priest here on earth who enters the Most Holy Place year after year with the blood of an animal. If that had been necessary, Christ would have had to die again and again, ever since the world began. But now, once for all time, he has appeared at the end of the age to remove sin by his own death as a sacrifice. And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment, so also Christ was offered once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again, not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him."

Under the Old Covenant system, if one trusted in the Law rather than the Grace of God to save him, he wasn't all of a sudden saved! The Law could never save, regardless of whether or not one trusted in it. This is the very reason God gave the sacrificial system! If the Law alone could be obeyed perfectly and save us, no shedding of blood would have been necessary, but the opposite is true:

Hebrews 9:22 " In fact, according to the law of Moses, nearly everything was purified with blood. For without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness."

Notice that "nearly everything was purified with blood". The Old Covenant Law purified no one; it in fact told them how guilty they were and condemned them! This is why blood - a picture of God's Lamb to come - needed to be shed. That's God's Grace!

So just exactly what does Grace do for the Believer?

Titus 2:11-14 "For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people. And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness, and devotion to God, while we look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed. He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing good deeds."

1- For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people:

First, God's Grace brings Salvation to all people! Grace is what makes us right with God; not Law. It's clear from our text that it's the Grace of God that delivers us from sin and spiritual death. Salvation is not only forgiveness of sins; it's deliverance from the very power of sin itself. Sin is the breaking of God's Law; thus, we conclude that Grace brings us into supernatural Holy Spirit Empowered obedience to the Law of God. In other words, Salvation empowers an individual to stop lying, to stop sleeping around, to stop walking in offence and unforgiveness, etc. At the same time, Grace not only removes our sin and gives us a hatred for sin, but it also produces within us a love for holiness and right living. In other words, we love what God loves and hate what God hates. It's a whole package deal!

2- And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures:

Next, God's Grace is a teacher, teaching us to turn from all outward sin (behavior) and sinful pleasures (the denial of inward evil desires). Grace deals with the whole person, both inwardly and outwardly. Some so-called "Grace Teachers" today have a repulsion to the preaching of good works; they claim that

we shouldn't focus on the fruit of Grace; that it will inevitably come on its own. If this is true, and it indeed is, then it's certainly not a bad thing to preach good works! If I want to tell a blind person what an apple looks like on the outside since he's been tasting it all of his life, I have to describe its makeup. In the same way, if an individual is not knowledgeable on good works, should we leave them blind to what good works look like as a result of Grace? No, we should not. We should be preaching and teaching both the root (Grace) and the fruit (Good Works).

3- We should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness, and devotion to God:

Grace will cause us to see this world as evil and to understand that we're not to be partakers with this world's system of seeing and doing things. It also gives us a desire to live with wisdom - to apply the right choices in any given situation. Then, it teaches us to live in righteousness, which is right standing with God. How does one receive right standing with God? By receiving Grace which will then evidence itself - without exception! - (see point #1 and point #2) by a lifestyle of inner and outer separation from sin. Righteousness means that we have right standing with God... and that's only because of Grace! That's exactly what the Grace of God does; it makes us right with God! We also see that Grace causes us to live in devotion to God. Think about what it means to be devoted. A loving mother is devoted to her children; she'll do anything for them! There's no need she won't attend to because of her infinite and unconditional love for them. Grace causes us to be devoted to God; to bring us into a place where there's absolutely nothing we won't do for Him because of our love for Him! We'll be devoted in all aspects of our lives and regardless of the personal cost we'll remain faithful to Him and to His heart.

4- While we look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed:

Grace gives us long term spiritual eyesight! It implants within us a an expectation for Christ to return in all of His glory for us, to take us to Himself! The Law brings fear of death while Grace brings the hope of a future with God Almighty! Those who rarely think of, who are afraid of or who reject the Second Coming of Jesus Christ are most certainly not under Grace. How can they be? God's Grace is evidenced in our lives in various ways, one being a hope for His return. Why does it impart this hope to us? It does so because we're forgiven, we live right, we reject sin and we have nothing to be ashamed of because His Grace has taken us out of darkness and has seated us in heavenly places with Christ Jesus our Lord. He's coming back again and He's coming for a Church which is

spotless, free from sin and its power. He's not coming back for a weak, defeated, sin-filled church. Such a church doesn't belong to Him; He knows only the Church of Grace!

5- He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people:

Why did Jesus Christ give His life for us? It's because He was full of Grace and truth (John 1:14)! That's what Grace does; it gives its life for the object of its affection and if Grace is in our lives we'll give our lives for the One who gives us Grace. His Grace frees us from "every" kind of sin. Not some sin.. every sin! Not only has He freed us, He's cleansed us and He's made us His very own people! So we see then that the Grace of God frees us from bondage to sexual sin, from hatred, from adultery, from offence, from division, from jealousy, from...."every" kind of sin. We're then cleansed from the sins that Jesus Christ, because of Grace, frees us from. What does it mean to be cleansed? Think of a child playing outside all day long. He walks in the house full of mud. His parents put him in the shower and wash away all of the dirt from his body with soap and he comes out clean and smelling good. That's what it means to be cleansed by Jesus Christ. His Grace comes into our lives and removes the stain and stench of sin that we once walked in and we come out clean!

The above is the picture of Grace and what Grace does in and through our lives. While some modern "Grace Teachers" claim that one can be under Grace while still practicing sin, we see the exact opposite in the Word of God. Now don't get me wrong! The Word of God nowhere states that it's impossible to sin; a Believer can indeed sin if he or she chooses to. That said, the Believer, because of Grace, doesn't have to sin. The idea that "you'll always sin" is a lie! Grace can cause us to walk in complete, total and absolute victory all the days of our lives on this earth! If, however, a Believer does sin, Grace is available!

1 John 1:9 "But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness."

John the Apostle uses the word "us". He's including himself here; this shows that he's not speaking of non-Believers but rather Christians, those who are saved by Grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8). Thus, "if" - not when - a Christian sins, he can be immediately forgiven and cleansed the moment he repents and confesses to the Lord.

Grace is available to and for a Christian who may choose to sin but it's also available to keep the Christian "from" sinning in the first place. Remember, Grace is our teacher; it teaches us to turn away from godless living and sinful pleasures. Sin in a Christian's life is abnormal; it's not something that should or

can be seen on a consistent basis. Why? Because while a Christian "can" sin, they will reject sin as the normal course of their lives. Those who continue in sin are not under Grace at all but are lost:

In 1 John 3:7-10 we read, "Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you about this: When people do what is right, it shows that they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous. But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil. Those who have been born into God's family do not make a practice of sinning, because God's life is in them. So they can't keep on sinning, because they are children of God. So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live righteously and does not love other believers does not belong to God."

Notice the words "when people keep on sinning". The Apostle John here is clearly differentiating between a Christian who commits sin and a so-called Christian who continues in sin. There's a huge difference! The Christian who commits a sin will immediately be convicted and repent; a so-called Christian who continues to live in and practice sin is of the devil; he or she is a counterfeit and is in fact lost. They may believe, feel and be fully convinced that even though they are living in sin that they are saved, yet we see the exact opposite here in 1 John 3.

In Romans 6, Paul the Apostle deals a death blow to the idea that one can walk in and live in Grace and yet continue to practice sin:

Romans 6:1-4 "Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it? Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives."

The one who is truly in the Grace of God doesn't continue in sin. In fact, how can he? Paul then says in verse 14 of the same chapter, "Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace."

Grace empowers the Believer to live under the Law... **but not the Old Law!**
We're empowered to live under a New Law:

Romans 8:1-4 "So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law

could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit."

In verse 2, both words translated as power in the Greek is "law". I'm quoting from the New Living Translation as it's my preferred Bible. Look the passage up in other translations and you will see the word "law". We're under the "law" of the Spirit of God. Is this law different from the Old Covenant Law? Yes, in that the Old Covenant Law could not save us; it lacked the Power of Grace and therefore we were chained to the power of sin and death. The requirement of the law was total obedience without ever breaking one law of God from birth to death and only Christ could accomplish this for you and I. Because He perfectly obeyed and fulfilled the requirements of God's Law, we now have full and complete access to God's Grace for our every temptation, trial, testing and tribulation! We now have access to God's Grace for empowerment to obey the Lord and continue to be sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

When we're truly under the Grace of God, the 10 Commandments will no longer be a burden to us but a joy; they'll no longer be something we come against as "legalism" but rather we'll delight in God's Law just as the Apostle Paul did:

Romans 7:22 "I love God's law with all my heart."

Paul the Apostle, the greatest Grace Teacher who ever lived outside of Jesus Christ, didn't come against God's Law as being "done away with"! On the contrary, he was in love with God's Law... with "all" of his heart! Why? Why was the Apostle in love with the Law of God? The answer is simple; it's because Grace wrote God's Law in his heart just as Grace writes the Law of God in the hearts of all genuine Born Again Believers in Christ:

Hebrews 10:16-18 "And the Holy Spirit also testifies that this is so. For he says, "This is the new covenant I will make with my people on that day, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds." Then he says, "I will never again remember their sins and lawless deeds." And when sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices."

Notice what it says! It says that "this" is the New Covenant; that God will write His Laws in our hearts! Some modern Grace Teachers today are saying the opposite, that Grace and the Law are incompatible; yet here we see that the Grace Covenant is manifested in God's Laws being written in our hearts. Notice it doesn't say God's Law (singular) but rather God's Laws (plural). What laws are

being spoken of here? Not *some* of God's Laws but clearly *all* of the moral law which is fulfilled by loving God with all that we are and loving our neighbor as ourselves:

Mark 12:28-31 "One of the teachers of religious law was standing there listening to the debate. He realized that Jesus had answered well, so he asked, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" Jesus replied, "The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these."

When we truly love God with all that we are and when we truly love our neighbor as ourself, we'll naturally live in a way that does no wrong to the Lord or to others; thus, we'll automatically be keeping all of God's Laws, not because we're trying really hard but rather because we're empowered by Grace to love!

Romans 13:8-10 "Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to love one another. If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill the requirements of God's law. For the commandments say, "You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not covet." These—and other such commandments—are summed up in this one commandment: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to others, so love fulfills the requirements of God's law."

Note what Grace does; it causes us to walk in God's Love which in turn causes us to obey God's laws. So we see that the law of God is not done away with but rather it still stands as the measuring stick of whether or not we're truly walking in Grace. We're no longer under the Law - the Old Covenant Law - but are now under the New Covenant Law of Love. This New Law of Love is manifested, according to Romans 13:8-10 in a way that empowers us to love others so that we fulfill the Old Covenant Law; not do away with it.

Grace is the enabling Power of God within the Believer to walk free from sin and to love others. The very fruit of Grace is that we are no longer those who walk in sin. In Matthew 7:15-20 we read these words:

"Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions."

Notice that Jesus did not say we can identify people by their Facebook posts, sermons or theology! He tells us plainly that people are identified "by their actions"; that is, how they live. If an individual is not walking in Grace then that individual will not love others and will, as a result, break the laws of God which will manifest itself in how they live their lives.

For example, if a man truly loves his wife, he won't commit adultery, lust after other women or indulge in pornography. If the husband verbally tells her that he loves her and yet walks in adultery, he's deceived and the truth is not in him. Another example would be a professing Believer who walks in offence towards another person. If a professing Christian harbors anger and bitterness against another person with no intention to forgive and walk in love, continuing to remain offended, they clearly break the Law of Love and unless they repent they will die spiritually.

Jesus said that we can "know" a person by their fruit; that is, by their actions. Some modern Grace Teachers bypass this spiritual principle and claim that one can still be under the Grace of God while their actions prove otherwise; thus, the modern Grace Teacher hardens the counterfeit Christian against turning from sin and coming into real genuine Grace.

Love! The Grace of God empowers us to love God and to love others. Because of this empowerment, we naturally keep God's Laws. Why? Because Grace produces fruit which is outside of the realm of Law yet which keeps the Law:

Galatians 5:22 says "But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!"

You see, the Law of God, while good, holy, righteous and to be loved with all of hearts because it reflects the very nature and character of God Himself, cannot produce any fruit in us! In fact, it tells us how sinful we are! The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, produces in us fruit which is outside of the realm of God's Law but which agrees with God's Law. That's what Grace does; it empowers us to walk in the Spirit and produce fruit that loves God and loves our neighbor, thus fulfilling God's laws.

We then read in Galatians 5:24-25 the following:

"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives."

Isn't that amazing news?! Those who "belong" to Jesus have had their old lives nailed to the Cross; they're now under a New and Living Law; the Law of Life!

The error that many make today is that they don't look to Grace for empowerment, freedom and cleansing; they look to the Law of Moses... and that's spiritually deadly!

In the book of Galatians we see Paul the Apostle writing to the Galatian church about looking to the Law to be made right with God:

Galatians 3:1-7 "Oh, foolish Galatians! Who has cast an evil spell on you? For the meaning of Jesus Christ's death was made as clear to you as if you had seen a picture of his death on the cross. Let me ask you this one question: Did you receive the Holy Spirit by obeying the law of Moses? Of course not! You received the Spirit because you believed the message you heard about Christ. How foolish can you be? After starting your new lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort? Have you experienced so much for nothing? Surely it was not in vain, was it? I ask you again, does God give you the Holy Spirit and work miracles among you because you obey the law? Of course not! It is because you believe the message you heard about Christ. In the same way, "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." The real children of Abraham, then, are those who put their faith in God."

Notice the words, "why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort?". There are those among us today who began their lives in Christ by faith - as this is the only way one "can" be saved! After some time, someone "cast an evil spell" on them and they were then influenced to seek to be made holy by the Law. It doesn't work! In fact, not only does it not work, it does the opposite of what one desires; it causes a Believer to fall from Grace and be cut off from Christ!

Galatians 5:1-4 "So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law. Listen! I, Paul, tell you this: If you are counting on circumcision to make you right with God, then Christ will be of no benefit to you. I'll say it again. If you are trying to find favor with God by being circumcised, you must obey every regulation in the whole law of Moses. For if you are trying to make yourselves right with God by keeping the law, you have been cut off from Christ! You have fallen away from God's grace."

Those who look to the Law to be made right with God in fact come under the curse of God! Why? Because they're no longer turning to Jesus by faith for His Grace; now they are turning to the Law and self effort to be made holy. They've turned from His shed Blood at Calvary and are now looking to self and their own power to keep the Law. The thing is, no one has any power to obey the Law of God! Obedience to the Law comes by Grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone!

Galatians 3:10-12 "But those who depend on the law to make them right with God are under his curse, for the Scriptures say, "Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the commands that are written in God's Book of the Law." So it is clear that no one can be made right with God by trying to keep the law. For the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life." This way of faith is very different from the way of law, which says, "It is through obeying the law that a person has life."

So here's the tricky part! The Law of God serves as a reflection of whether or not one is truly in Grace because if one is truly in Grace - as we have seen - they'll not break God's Laws. Because of this, some will inevitably look to their performance to see if they're keeping God's Laws and it's at that point that they begin the slippery slope downward in to legalism!

We're called - not to look to the Law of God - but rather to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself! If we continue to look to Jesus and trust in His Grace, we'll needn't look to our own performance to see if we're truly saved. Why? Because if we look to Jesus Christ alone and trust in Him alone to make us holy, our lives "will" be holy!

Hebrews 12:1-4 "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up. After all, you have not yet given your lives in your struggle against sin."

Notice in verse 2 that we remain sin free how? By keeping our eyes on the Law? No!:

"We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith."

By keeping our eyes on Jesus, we're given grace to throw off sin and run the race with endurance. Jesus Christ is the One who initiates and perfects our faith; not Law or self effort to keep the Law. Christ alone is our Salvation from sin and from sin's power. His Grace is the empowering force that causes our lives to remain sin-free as opposed to sin-filled!

In Hebrews 14:16 we read: " So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most."

[Jason Ashe](#) rightly said in his teaching on Grace that, "it is through an everyday life of humility and cross bearing that we draw near to the throne of grace, so that in that time of need, grace automatically comes. As we walk continually in the way of humility we are drawing near to the throne of grace everyday, so when something happens that we need an abundance of grace for, it is immediately *given* from the hand of the father to His humble children."

Running to the Law of God for help will only disappoint us; the Law has no power to help us... it only condemns us! Not because the Law is bad; but because men are bad! The Law is good and holy and it serves it's purpose and that purpose is to damn the one who not under Grace and to be a reflection of holiness for the one who is under Grace. The Law damns the lost and confirms the saved but only Christ imparts Grace!

We're called to run to the Throne of Grace when we're faced with temptations and struggles and in doing so we're promised by God that we'll receive His mercy and His empowering grace for whatever it is we're in need of. Not law but grace!

In closing, I want to encourage you today to love the Law of God with all of your heart just as the Apostle Paul did... but run only to the Throne of Grace just as it was also Paul the Apostle who instructed us to do that. I want to provoke you to look to Jesus Christ alone for your help and not to your own self effort; not to the Law of God; not to a made up list of do's and dont's!

In James 4:6 we read that "He gives grace generously. As the Scriptures say, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

If you'll humble yourself and come to God through Jesus Christ, the Lord promises to not only give you grace but to give it *generously*!

Do you struggle with a besetting sin; a bondage? Look to Christ! Do you need power to overcome? Look to Christ! Are you in need of forgiveness? Look to Christ! Are you longing for God's Presence and Power in your life and ministry? Look to Christ!

1 Peter 5:12 "Stand firm in this grace."

I want to conclude with a final quote from Brother Jason Ashe:

"When I was younger, my grandfather and I would get water from a spring. We would catch water running over a cliff while we stood at the bottom with a

bucket. It's one of my favorite childhood memories because seemed like that water never stopped. If we had one bucket, we could fill it up with water. If we had five, we could fill them up with water. God's grace is like that. Always available, anytime, in any circumstance. If we are humble and lowly we will receive it whenever we need it."